



Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

# MCDHH NEWS

Spring 2006

## Welcome to Our New Commissioner

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**T**he Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is pleased to announce that Governor Matt Blunt has appointed Ms. Emily Northcraft of Kansas City to the Commission. Ms. Northcraft fills the currently vacant position that is defined in statute as being for a deaf or hard of hearing person. Ms. Northcraft has a Bachelor of Fine

Arts degree in Graphic Design from Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. She worked for the past several years as a Graphic Designer for Luminous Neon Art and Sign Systems, and she is currently employed by H & H Color Labs as a Masterpiece Edition Graphic Artist. She is president of the Cochlear Implant Club of the Midwest, a volunteer member of the Disaster Action Team of the Greater Kansas City Area Chapter of the American Red Cross, and a volunteer with the DeLaSalle Education Center (the only private secular alternative school system in Kansas City).



Emily Northcraft — New Commissioner

Ms. Northcraft is also an avid skydiver with the Missouri River Valley Skydivers. The staff of MCDHH cordially welcomes Ms. Northcraft to the commission and looks forward to working together to improve the lives and opportunities of all Missourians with a hearing loss.

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## Six Flags in 2006

We want to remind everyone that the annual MCDHH Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Day at Six Flags will be held on Saturday, June 10th this year. This will be our 13th year for hosting this event. So, if you're not superstitious about the number "13", please come and join us for a day of mirth and merriment!

## Jail Communications Accessibility Survey

Last year MCDHH completed a survey of communications access for persons with hearing loss in Missouri jails. Survey questionnaires were sent out to all 113 jails in Missouri, and 81 completed questionnaires were eventually returned giving a very good 72 percent (72%) response rate. MCDHH extends our most sincere thanks to all of the jail administrators that participated in last year's survey.

In general, the survey results present a rather bleak picture of how well jails across our state are doing when it comes to providing communications accessibility for deaf and hard of hearing people. In many areas Missouri jails clearly cannot meet their legal responsibilities for providing access. For example, 75% of Missouri jails cannot provide TTY's to deaf and hard of hearing detainees to use for making outgoing calls, and only 40% provide interpreters to deaf people when giving the Miranda warnings.

The results of this survey are now available in the form of a "Consumer Report" entitled "Communications Accessibility in Missouri Jails." That Report can be found on the MCDHH website, and is available in hardcopy to anyone who contacts the MCDHH office and requests a copy. MCDHH sincerely hopes that this "Consumer Report" will serve as a stimulus for deaf and hard of hearing people throughout the state of Missouri to visit their local jail and ask about communications accessibility for people with hearing loss at that facility. And, if needed, you should request that your local jail review its policies, practices, and capabilities related to providing communications access to persons with hearing loss. Please don't wait until a friend of yours with hearing loss is detained in your local jail to find out that the staff at your jail does not know how to obtain an interpreter or where to get an assistive listening device. Serious discussions concerning communications accessibility with your local jail before such accessibility is actually needed can save someone a lot of pain and frustration!

## Kandice Allee Becomes Permanent MICS Coordinator



Kandice Allee – MICS Coordinator

When Amy Fowler resigned from her position as Coordinator of the Missouri Interpreters Certification System last summer, MCDHH was extremely fortunate in being able to move Kandice Allee into the Acting Coordinator's role. Kandice had worked at the MCDHH office for several years as Executive Assistant/Staff Interpreter and was able to fulfill the responsibilities of the Coordinator both immediately and effectively, including hosting the largest Missouri Interpreters Conference ever held. MCDHH is pleased to announce that Kandice is no longer the "Acting" Coordinator, but rather has been given the responsibilities of that position on a full-time, permanent basis.

## The ASL Bill and Transfer Credit

Last summer, Governor Blunt signed HB 530 into law, and that law became effective on August 28, 2005. That marked the end of a very long effort to enact an ASL statute in Missouri. The language of the law specifically requires that American Sign Language be counted toward satisfaction of any foreign language or language arts requirements in any public school or public institution of higher education in Missouri, and it requires that ASL be accepted for meeting the "foreign language" entrance requirements of any public institution of higher education in Missouri. But a serious question has recently arisen regarding the exact meaning of HB 530, and that question needs clarification.

Specifically, the question has been asked "Does HB 530 require a university to accept ASL for transfer credit?" The answer to that is "No." What courses a university will accept for transfer credit is and has always been completely up to that university. Some universities may accept a course in Chinese and give transfer credit for that course, while other universities may not. The situation is exactly the same for a class or classes in American Sign Language (ASL). If the university has a "foreign language" entrance requirement ASL classes must be accepted for meeting that requirement. But whether or not a university will give students transfer credit for taking ASL classes is completely up to that university.

## 2006 Empowerment Symposium

Please mark your calendar and reserve Saturday, October 14th for attending the 2006 MCDHH Empowerment Symposium. This year's Empowerment Symposium will be held at the Tan-Tar-A Resort in conjunction with the 13th annual Missouri Interpreters Conference.



2005 Empowerment Symposium — ASL Panel

## MCDHH Spring Exhibits

The spring of every year is always the busiest season for hosting MCDHH exhibits at various venues, and this year will be no exception. We began the exhibiting season by setting up our exhibit table at the "Pathways to Student Success" conference, which was held at Tan-Tar-A on 3/5-6/06. The next weekend (3/11-12/06) we were exhibiting at the annual conference of the Kansas Association of Interpreters. A week later (3/19-21/06) we exhibited at the Show-Me Professional Development Conference (a new venue for us this year). A couple of weeks later (3/31/06 - 4/2/06) we were at the Missouri Speech-Language-Hearing Association Conference. On April 4/10-11/06 we were answering questions at the annual Power Up Conference, and on 4/22/06 our exhibit can be found at DeafNation Expo in the St. Charles Convention Center (another new and exciting venue for this year). MCDHH exhibits at various places throughout the year in pursuit of our legislative mandate to enhance deaf awareness.

## 2006 Legislative Priorities

After receiving feedback from deaf and hard of hearing Missourians, MCDHH chose its top two consumer oriented priorities for the current 2006 legislative session. During 2006 we had bills introduced that would (1) mandate real-time captioning of all local news, weather, and sports programs broadcast by Missouri television stations (HB 1825), and (2) mandate that all physical forms of electronic visual educational media that include spoken information marketed or sold to Missouri schools be either open or closed captioned (HB 1036). This would include media such as CD ROMs, DVDs, VHS videos, and film. Currently, both of these bills are still in the House. If you want to keep informed concerning the progress of these important legislative initiatives, and perhaps even provide some support for the efforts of MCDHH at critical points in the legislative process, send an e-mail to [MCDHH@mcdhh.mo.gov](mailto:MCDHH@mcdhh.mo.gov) and ask to be added to our listserv (MCDHH-L).



## New Staff Interpreter at MCDHH

MCDHH is pleased to announce that Ms. Stacie Bickel has recently joined our staff as our new Executive Assistant/Staff Interpreter. Stacie was born and raised in Jefferson City, and graduated from William Woods University in 2002 with a B.S. degree in ASL/English Interpreting. In 2004 she received an M.A. degree from Gallaudet University, again in ASL/English Interpreting. While at Gallaudet University she served as a graduate assistant in the Office for Students with Disabilities. Stacie is certified at the Comprehensive level in the Missouri Interpreters Certification System, and holds an RID Certificate of Interpretation (CI). She has worked as a freelance interpreter in mid-Missouri, Washington, D.C., and the metropolitan Chicago area. Before joining the MCDHH staff, she was employed as an adjunct instructor in the ASL/Interpreting Department of Columbia College of Chicago. We are delighted that Stacie has decided to “return home” and has agreed to join the MCDHH staff. Please make her feel welcome!



**Stacie Bickel**  
**Executive Assistant/Staff Interpreter**

## Updated MCDHH Brochure Now Available

An updated MCDHH brochure is now available for distribution at the MCDHH office. The updated brochure describes the programs and services of MCDHH and has the most current contact information for MCDHH, including phone and fax numbers, as well as e-mail and web addresses. Copies of the recently updated brochure may be obtained simply by contacting the MCDHH office.

## When 100% Does Not Mean “EVERYTHING”

The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) has ruled that beginning January 1, 2006 all new television programming (100%) must be captioned. Regretfully, many people have misunderstood the “100%” rule, and MCDHH hopes to clarify the situation a little by carefully explaining the new rule.

First, one must be aware of the “exemptions” to the rule. Unfortunately 100% does not mean “everything” to the FCC. It’s another instance of the not uncommon practice of a federal agency making numbers sound like they mean something other than what they actually mean. In particular, there are several very important “exemptions” to the 100% rule. For example, most programming that is broadcast between the hours of 2:00 AM and 6:00 AM local time is exempt. This means that almost

**100% ≠ EVERYTHING**

all of the programming in 17% of the day is categorically

exempted. Perhaps the FCC thinks that there are no “night owls” among people with hearing loss. Additionally, all locally produced and distributed non-news programming with “no repeat value” is exempt. All programs that are shown on new television networks are exempt for the first four years of the network’s operations. Also, all public service announcements that are shorter than ten minutes are exempt (unless they are funded or produced by a federal program). And all programs broadcast by channels producing revenues of under \$3,000,000 during the previous year are exempt as well.

Second, one must be aware of the requirements regarding “pre-rule” programs. Under the FCC rule all old programs still are not covered. Rather, there is a phase in period for what is referred to as “pre-rule” programming (that is, any program first shown on television before January 1, 1998). Unfortunately, only 30% of pre-rule programming must be captioned as of January 1, 2006. This means that the vast majority of the “oldies” but “goodies” still will not be captioned.

Third, one needs to be aware of the special treatment given to the “electronic newsroom.” While all broadcasts of local news are clearly “new” programming, the FCC allows the use of what is referred to as “electronic newsroom” technology for meeting the requirement that local news broadcasts are captioned (unless a station is in the top 25 television markets in the country). With the “electronic newsroom,” only dialogue that is pre-scripted and placed on the teleprompter is broadcast as captions. Typically all of the weather, sports, remote coverage, breaking news, and impromptu chitchat among the reporters is unscripted, and thus is not captioned – and that can be almost 50% of a local news program! This means that deaf and hard of hearing persons will not know if the murder in the breaking news coverage was committed on the other side of town (no need to worry) or just down the street (better lock all the doors and windows). And they will not know if the tornado is approaching the south suburbs of their town (no problem) or the north suburbs (where they live). The only way to ensure the complete communication of all of the local news content, and thus the safety of all deaf and hard of hearing viewers, is for the FCC to require real-time captioning of all local news broadcasts.

Thanks to the advocacy of many individuals and organizations serving people who are deaf and hard of hearing we have come a long ways down the road to complete captioning of all television programming. However, nobody should be misled into thinking that because 100% of all “non-exempt new programming” must now be captioned that this means that everything they see on television is supposed to be captioned. We still have a long way to go before that goal is ever reached.

## 2006 Missouri Interpreters Conference

The 13th Annual Missouri Interpreters Conference will be held at Tan-Tar-A Resort, Golf Club, Marina & Waterpark in Osage Beach, Missouri on October 13-15, 2006. MCDHH is currently accepting presentation/workshop proposals, and we are recruiting exhibitors and interpreters who want to work at the Conference. In order to best serve the professional development needs of all conference participants, proposals are requested for presentations/workshops at all levels - beginning, intermediate, and advanced. The deadline for workshop proposals is April 27th. Proposals can be sent by e-mail to [Kandice.allee@mcdhh.mo.gov](mailto:Kandice.allee@mcdhh.mo.gov), by fax to 573-526-5209, or by "snail mail" sent to the MCDHH office. As always, at the Interpreters Conference there will be many presentations/workshops to choose from, exhibits to browse, silent auction items to bid on, a great luncheon, and a Saturday night dance for those who want to "get loose." Over 650 participants are expected to attend this year's conference. Plan to join us! It should be another great conference!

### Date for Silver Dollar City

The date for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Weekend at Silver Dollar City is finally set. August 12th will be our day for "Fun in the Sun" at SDC this year. Summertime is vacation time for most people, and the park will be hosting the National Kids Festival during August. So plan to bring the whole family with you this year! Please mark your calendars, and be sure to join us for a fun-filled day in Missouri's scenic Ozarks.



### Conversion of MICS Testing System to DVD

MCDHH is pleased to announce the conversion of the MICS interpreter certification system from a videotape (VHS) system to a digital video disk (DVD) based system. DVD will provide higher quality images for persons taking the MICS performance test, will require much less media storage space at the MCDHH office, will increase the stability and durability of the test medium, and we anticipate allow us to reduce the lag time between testing and notification of test results. All of the equipment for this conversion is now ready and the installation should be completed in the near future. The MCDHH staff looks forward to providing enhanced service to MICS test takers once the DVD equipment is totally up and running.

## REMINDER: Videophone Access at MCDHH

For some deaf and hard of hearing people, use of traditional telecommunication relay services (TRS) is not always desirable. For example, they may have a difficult time easily, clearly and quickly explaining their needs using written English. Rather, they may feel much more comfortable using American Sign Language (ASL) and making calls with a video relay service (VRS). For any such individuals who do not have access to a videophone, MCDHH invites them to use the videophone at the MCDHH office. Usage of the videophone is free, but it must be scheduled with the MCDHH staff at least one day in advance, and can only be scheduled for a maximum of one hour on a given day.

## MCDHH Annual Awards

**M**CDHH is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2005 awards. These awards were presented at the annual Missouri Interpreters Conference last fall, and the worthy recipients are as follows:

Deaf Evaluator of the Year – Jane A. Ross (Springfield)

Hearing Evaluator of the Year – Rebecca A. Blich (Highlandville)

MCDHH Angel – Silver Dollar City (Branson)

Employee of the Year – Ameir Smith (Jefferson City)

Lifetime Achievement Awards:

Kenneth R. Alexander (Clayton)

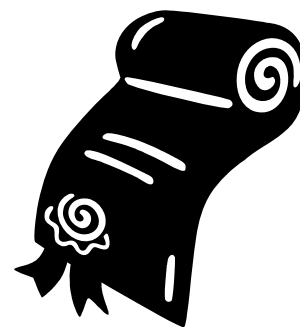
Judith A. Bastean (Fulton)

Robert F. Foster (St. Louis)

William B. Sheldon (St. Louis)

Norma L. Vickers (Fulton)

Ula Williams (Turney)



Please make every effort to CONGRATULATE these people the next time that you see any of them, and let them know that their services to people who are deaf and hard of hearing are greatly appreciated.

## CATIE Center and JCCC Grants for Mentorship

**M**CDHH is excited to announce that we have received two small grants to develop and implement an interpreter mentorship program in our state. The Collaborative for the Advancement of Teaching Interpreter Excellence at the College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, Minnesota, provided a grant to bring Robyn Dean to Missouri to present a training workshop for certified interpreters who were interested in becoming mentors. That workshop was held during the first weekend in March and ten potential mentors were trained using the “Demand-Control Schema” developed by Ms. Dean. The other grant was provided by the former Region 7 RSA Interpreter Partnership at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, Kansas and will be used to complete the implementation of the mentorship program. It is anticipated that actual mentoring relationships will be established sometime during this coming summer.

## MCDHH Staff Attend CEPIN Training

**A**s a part of its efforts to improve communications with people with hearing loss during emergencies, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security awarded Telecommunications for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Inc. (TDI) a grant for the Community Emergency Preparedness Information Network (CEPIN) project. One part of that project was to provide training for emergency responders and people with hearing loss together in order to facilitate better understanding of the needs and priorities of both groups in emergency situations. In February, two MCDHH staff members, Roy Miller (Executive Director) and Kim Davis (Workshop / Training Specialist), attended a three-day training hosted by the National Center for Biomedical Research & Training Academy of Counter-Terrorist Education in order to become certified to offer the CEPIN training. They also recently attended one of the CEPIN pilot workshops in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in order to complete their certification requirements. The CEPIN course (Emergency Responders and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community: Taking the First Steps to Disaster Preparedness) will now be offered in Missouri at a time and place yet to be determined.

### Commission Members

Paul Blicharz, Chair  
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Organization

Kathleen Alexander, Vice-Chair  
Interpreter

Thomas Bastean  
Dept. of Elem. & Sec. Ed/MSD

Michael Boyd  
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Member

Lisa Geier  
Professional—Audiology

Leslie Hall  
Business Community

Emily Northcraft  
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Member

Antonina Wilson  
Parent of a Deaf/Hard of Hearing Child

Vacant  
Local Public School Administrator

## FCC Captioning Complaints

Have you ever become angry when watching a suspenseful movie and the captions disappear a few minutes before the end of the movie? Have you started to watch an “old favorite” show that you know is captioned only to find that there are no captions for the episode that you are viewing? Have you ever been watching one of your favorite television programs when all of a sudden the captions are blocked by a scrolling message concerning tomorrow’s school closings? Whenever you encounter one of these situations you may file a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Complaints to the FCC can be submitted on-line by going to <http://svartifoss2.fcc.gov/cib/fcc475.cfm> and providing the requested information. Complaints to the FCC can also be sent by fax to 1-866-418-0232, by email sent to [fccinfo@fcc.gov](mailto:fccinfo@fcc.gov), or by “snail mail” sent to: Federal Communications Commission, Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, Consumer Complaints, 445 - 12th St, SW, Washington, D.C. 20554.



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